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THE THEOSOPHICAL
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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

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OUR POINT OF VIEW.

The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim good will and kindly feeling towards all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

It joins hands with all religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a scientific basis for ethics.

And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the Path they tread in this.

V. 6
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" I understand, Socrates. It is because you say
" that you always have a divine sign. So he is
" prosecuting you for introducing new things into
" religion. And he is going into court knowing
" that such matters are easily misrepresented to
" the multitude, and consequently meaning to
" slander you there." *Plato.*

II.

"Well, it is something like that with the precipitated letters. One of our Masters, who perhaps does not know English, and of course has no English handwriting, wishes to precipitate a letter in answer to a question sent mentally to him. Let us say he is in Tibet, while I am in Madras or London. He has the answering thought in his mind, but not in English words. He has first to impress that thought on my brain, or on the brain of someone else who knows English, and then to take the word-forms that rise up in that other brain to answer the thought. Then he must form a clear mind picture of the words in writing, also drawing on my brain, or the brain of whoever it is, for the shapes. Then either through me or some Chela with whom he is magnetically connected, he has to precipitate these word-shapes on paper, first sending the shapes into the Chela's mind, and then driving them into the paper, using the magnetic force of the Chela to do the printing, and collecting the material, black or blue or red, as the case may be, from the astral light. As all things dissolve into the astral light, the will of the magician can draw them forth again. So he can draw forth colors of pigments to mark the figure in the letter, using the magnetic force of the Chela to stamp them in, and guiding the whole by his own much greater magnetic force, a current of powerful will."

"That sounds quite reasonable," I answered. "Won't you show me how it is done?"

"You would have to be clairvoyant," she answered, in a perfectly direct and matter-of-fact way, "in order to see and guide the currents. But this is the point: Suppose the letter precipitated through me; it would naturally show some traces of my expressions,

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and even of my writing; but all the same, it would be a perfectly genuine occult phenomenon, and a real message from that Mahatma. Besides, when all is said and done, they exaggerate the likeness of the writings. And experts are not infallible. We have had experts who were just as positive that I could not possibly have written those letters, and just as good experts, too. But the Report says nothing about them. And then there are letters, in just the same handwriting, precipitated when I was thousands of miles away. Dr. Hartmann received more than one at Adyar, Madras, when I was in London; I could hardly have written that."

"They would simply say Dr. Hartmann was the fraud, in that case."

"Certainly," cried H. P. B., growing angry now; "we are all frauds and liars, and the lambkin from Australia is the only true man. My dear, it is too much. It is insolent!" And then she laughed at her own warmth, a broad, good-humored Homeric laugh, as hers always was, and finally said:

"But you have seen some of the occult letters? What do you say?"

"Yes," I replied; "Mr. Sinnett showed me about a ream of them; the whole series that the Occult World and Esoteric Buddhism are based on. Some of them are in red, either ink or pencil, but far more are in blue. I thought it was pencil at first, and I tried to smudge it with my thumb; but it would not smudge."

"Of course not!" she smiled; "the color is driven into the surface of the paper. But what about the writings?"

"I am coming to that. There were two: the blue writing, and the red; they were totally different from each other, and both were quite unlike yours. I have spent a good deal of time studying the relation of handwriting to character, and the two characters were quite clearly marked. The blue was evidently a man of very gentle and even character, but of tremendously strong will; logical, easy-going, and taking endless pains to make his meaning clear. It was altogether the handwriting of a cultivated and very sympathetic man."

"Which I am not," said H. P. B., with a smile; "that is Mahatma Koothoomi; he is a Kashmiri Brahman by birth, you know, and has traveled a good deal in Europe. He is the author of the Occult World

letters, and gave Mr. Sinnett most of the material of Esoteric Buddhism. But you have read all about it all."

"Yes, I remember he says you shriek across space with a voice like Sarasvati's peacock. Hardly the sort of thing you would say of yourself."

"Of course not," she said; "I know I am a nightingale. But what about the other writing?"

"The red? Oh that is wholly different. It is fierce, impetuous, dominant, strong; it comes in volcanic outbursts, while the other is like Niagara Falls. One is fire, and the other is the ocean. They are wholly different, and both quite unlike yours. But the second has more resemblance to yours than the first."

"This is my Master," she said, "whom we call Mahatma Morya. I have his picture here."

And she showed me a small panel in oils. If ever I saw genuine awe and reverence in a human face, it was in hers, when she spoke of her Master. He was a Rajput by birth, she said, one of the old warrior race of the Indian desert, the finest and handsomest nation in the world. Her Master was a giant, six feet eight, and splendidly built; a superb type of manly beauty. Even in the picture, there is a marvelous power and fascination; the force, the fierceness even, of the face; the dark, glowing eyes, which stare you out of countenance; the clear-cut features of bronze, the raven hair and beard—all spoke of a tremendous individuality, a very Zeus in the prime of manhood and strength. I asked her something about his age. She answered:

"My dear, I cannot tell you exactly, for I do not know. But this I will tell you. I met him first when I was twenty,—in 1851. He was in the very prime of manhood then. I am an old woman now, but he has not aged a day. He is still in the prime of manhood. That is all I can say. You may draw your own conclusions."

"Have the Mahatmas discovered the elixir of life?"

"That is no fable," said H. P. B. seriously. "It is only the veil hiding a real occult process, warding off age and dissolution for periods which would seem fabulous, so I will not mention them. The secret is this: for every man, there is a climacteric, when he must draw near to death; if he has squandered his life-powers, there is no escape for him; but if he has lived according to the law, he may

pass through, and so continue in the same body almost indefinitely."

Then she told me something about other Masters and adepts she had known,—for she made a difference, as though the adepts were the captains of the occult world, and the Masters were the generals. She had known adepts of many races, from Northern and Southern India, Tibet, Persia, China, Egypt; of various European nations, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, English; of certain races in South America, where she said there was a Lodge of adepts.

"It is the tradition of this which the Spanish Conquistadores found," she said; "the golden city of Manoah or El Dorado. The race is allied to the ancient Egyptians, and the adepts have still preserved the secret of their dwelling-place inviolable. There are certain members of the Lodges who pass from center to center, keeping the lines of connection between them unbroken. But they are always connected in other ways."

"In their astral bodies?"

"Yes," she answered, "and in other ways still higher. They have a common life and power. As they rise in spirituality, they rise above difference of race, to our common humanity. The series is unbroken. Adepts are a necessity in nature and in supernature. They are the links between men and the gods; these "gods" being the souls of great adepts and Masters of by-gone races and ages, and so on, up to the threshold of Nirvana. The continuity is unbroken."

"What do they do?"

"You would hardly understand, unless you were an adept. But they keep alive the spiritual life of mankind."

"What does it feel like, to go sailing about in your astral body? I sometimes dream I am flying, and I am always in the same position; almost lying on my back, and going feet foremost. Is it anything like that?"

"That is not what I feel," she said; "I feel exactly like a cork rising to the top of water, you understand. The relief is immense. I am only alive then. And then I go to the Master."

"Come back to what were saying. I ought not to have interrupted you. How do the adepts guide the souls of men?"

(To be continued.)

6

THE UNFOLDING OF LIFE.

The hills are shadows, and they flow
From form to form, and nothing stands;
They melt like mist, the solid lands,
Like clouds they shape themselves and go.

TENNYSON. *In Memoriam. CXXIII.*

Unceasing change is the supreme law of being. Even those forms of matter which are called lifeless are but aspects of restless activity. The crystal is a product of chemical affinity and change. As it has formed, so it will dissolve, and, even when buried below the deepest mine, it thrills with electric and magnetic pulses, which, as the records of the magnetic observatories tell us, sweep in ceaseless tides through the solid earth.

The hills are carved by the rain-drops and silently melt away. New contingents grow in the matrix of the great deep, to await the time when the throes of the great mother will bring them to the light.

If these things are true even of the "everlasting hills", how much faster must the rate of change be for all living things. Looking out, our eyes review the procession of life, as it passes before us: and, looking in, we view and review an ever shifting panorama of consciousness, and we ask ourselves: "What is the meaning of all this, and how long will it last."

Even omniscience could not satisfy those impatient minds which demand a complete answer, in a minute, to the most profound questions. Such minds, like that of the monkey, are distracted by each new impulse, and have a new question before the answer to the first is half heard. A completely human intelligence should have enough of the patience of the divine to consider all things fully, and to accept imperfection for the sake of some small advance. If therefore, a student, in sympathy with modern science and also with the spirit of an older philosophy, ventures to offer a few outlines of thought, it is to be understood that these are only suggestions to fellow students and not dogmatic claims to special knowledge.

In the search for truth it is well indeed that tests or proofs need not be forever repeated. A geometrical theorem once proved re-

mains proved for all time. The properties of squares, circles and triangles have not changed since the days of Pythagoras and Euclid, and we feel certain that, so far as we have mastered their principles, the work is done for all time.

But, uniformity is not confined to the applications of mathematical law. We find that in the manifestation of the forces of nature there is a similar uniformity. This we learn by experience, for the cause of this uniformity is not yet self-evident. It enables us by a single accurate experiment to become possessed of a far-reaching truth. Whether or not it is true that Newton was led to the discovery of the law of gravitation by a train of thought started by the fall of an apple, the story is at least an illustration of the fact that the most trifling phenomenon is a sample of some cosmic law, and that if we can understand the cause, by more than name, we have learned a great thing and taken one step toward the mastery of the universe.

When the chemist wants to learn the properties of iron or of silicon, he may do it by extracting these elements from a pebble picked up in his back yard. When the atomic weights and chemical affinities have been accurately determined he knows that he has done something which has taught him the nature of two elements composing a large part of the earth, and he knows that iron or silicon from Patagonia or Siberia would tell him the same story. He may repeat his experiments, it is true, but this is simply to prove the accuracy with which his conditions have been maintained and not because he fears that an element, when separated in a state of purity and under like conditions, will act at one time in one way and at another time in another way. Should his results disagree he knows at once that he has not fully controlled all the conditions. He does not dream of ascribing a whimsical mutability to the laws of nature.

In like manner the student of physics, while conscious of his own liability to error, is yet certain that a single sunbeam, as it shines through a knot-hole, will teach him secrets of boundless space. He has but to read its story aright.

So there is nothing so small or so mean as to be forgotten: no grain of sand overlooked by the pull of sun and earth; no little creature unknown to the all-inclusive life within which it lives and moves and has its being. When we learn the law of the unfolding

of that small life we shall know much of that which has clothed the earth, through the cycles of time, with an ever changing robe.

A Norse legend tells us that Thor, a God and yet a Man, once visited a castle of enchantment. He was tried with tasks that seemed little in themselves but which proved to be of such surpassing difficulty as to cause him to doubt his own divinity.

A horn of liquor was presented to him and he was told that a good drinker could empty it at a draught. He applied himself to it, but, to his astonishment, appeared to produce no impression. After a second and even à third tremendous pull, he found that the level of the liquor was lowered but a little. Chagrined, he gave up the attempt, thinking himself defeated. When, however, he left the castle, his giant host told him that he had done a most wonderful deed. The horn was connected with the ocean, so that Thor had actually lowered its level, as he found when he reached the shore.

In like manner we retire, baffled again and again, as we attempt the solution of some apparently simple problem. But, when we solve that little problem, we may find that we have mastered some world-wide truth. The secret of the door-yard pebble, or seed, will cost many weary hours, but, when we have gained it, we shall know much of the building of a world.

All this has beeen said before by many men, in many ways, and yet how often forgotten, as we shall see later. We demand some great thing from afar, whine for the uplifted hand of a Master, for some special and divine revelation, some royal river, to cleanse us of our ignorance. When told that there is virtue in the wayside brook, we look with contempt at its familiar pools and revile the prophet and his prescription.

9

THE HEART OF THE MYSTERY.

> ". . . Beheld the immortals sweatless, steady-eyed, their garlands fresh, and touching not the ground; but he, doubled by his shadow, standing there upon the earth, was stained with dust and sweat, his garland faded."

What heart but at times grows weary of this our human life, with its births, its marriages, its deaths; with its pathways of small ambition and sordid struggle leading forward in monotonous deadly certainty to the green mound beneath the cypresses? Who has not cried out in spirit against it all, longing to turn back from the beaten road where mankind runs, with a dazed eagerness like that haunted herd of Gadara, swept by demoniac presences down the steep to the blue Genesaret waves? There is pathos in it too, and pitifulness; even for the most infatuate, life soon wears so threadbare, so seamed with dullest commonness, that the hurrying troop of doomed men and women would presently cast away their burden, were it not snatched from their shoulders by the old man with the hourglass, who ushers them into the silence.

Who has not felt in moments of clear sight, in hours of inspiration, that these good people are ridden with dreams, and we along with them; that we have elsewhere a quite other history not made of epitaphs but written in letters of gold, with words of fire, in the serene halls of the immortals? Man dreams that he moves forward; he only moves from dream to dream. He is demon-ridden, dwelling altogether among shadows, and that most of all when he is most confidently sensual and material. But there are times when he outgrows the form and color of his dream, and must have change. The sleeper restlessly moves and murmurs in his sleep; then for one startled moment he opens his eyes to the everlasting sunshine.

Then comes a new dream, a new epoch, a new era. So it was two thousand years ago, when the Roman world of beneficent callous force was wearing itself out, when the dream of Olympian Jove was fading. Then were spoken words among the Galilean hills that let in the light of the Eternal, and for a moment the eyes of mortal man gazed into the shining eyes of his brother the immortal. Then man-

kind sank back again to dream. There remained only broken fragments of the message, like words set echoing among the rocks, to bear evidence of the revelation. The old Roman dream of dominion flowed back again, staining the ray of celestial light. What belonged to Caesar was rendered to God.

The new era enthroned a heavenly monarch in the purple, darkening altogether the true vision of the divine, the vision of man the immortal. Our kingdoms and empires with their claims of election and grace, their mandate from on high, were but copies of imperial Rome touched with the ray of Galilee; our divinity, but an image of these earthly potentates exalted to the heavens, an autocrat exacting homage, gathering tribute, and entering into treaties with mankind. A few enjoyed the suffrage of salvation; the rest were doomed to servitude in hell.

Centuries have passed, and this dream too has faded. The power of the celestial Caesar has declined. His jeweled throne is crumbling. The nether fires are out. The golden city is deserted; grass is growing in its streets. The songs of cherubim and seraphim are stilled, and silence reigns through the high halls of heaven. With the passing of the divine Caesar's throne, fades too the materialism which undermined it, hardly outliving his fall. Materialism is already out of date, grown grotesque and antiquated. We are offered instead a physical proof of our immortality, material evidence of the enduring soul.

So that dream within a dream has faded, and there comes a lull, when the light from beyond the heavens once more sends forth its ray to challenge the darkness. As of old, it brings the message of our present immortality, not in a dim future paradise, but here and now; of salvation not by faith or works, but by creative will; of immediate and intimate touch with the eternal heart of being. Even here and now, we are in the midst of the everlasting; we catch the immortal whisper, feel the immortal fire in our hearts, the touch of an immortal finger summoning us forth into light.

Then the dreams of our desires come upon us again, and imaginings of terror; the cynical unfaith of sensuality, and that very human cry for yet a little slumbering and sleep. We are once more entangled among shadows, and hurry forward dazed to the lake-edge of Gadara. Yet there is a golden clew to guide us forth from this

labyrinth of dreams; there is a path that leads us back from the abyss of death, easy to find, yet hard to follow, and calling for the valor and vision of immortals in those who would tread its ways.

The shadows may be met and overcome. And first of all, the shadow of our sensuality. Our error here is easy to indicate, and well worth mending; for its fruit is inevitable death. We sin by meeting the natural world in a wrong and vicious way; with a demand for sensations, instead of an offer of work. We desire keenness of feeling, keenness of life; and we have a right to it, but we take the wrong way to gain it, and nature herself ceaselessly admonishes us of our mistake.

Nature intends sensation only as a guide to work, a guide for the will; but we make sensation an end in itself, and thus incur inevitable doom. For sensation which is not turned to the purposes of the will must bear one of two fruits: either at every repetition the stir of feeling will grow less, rendered callous by use until there comes the dullness of total insensibility; or, if the outward stimulus be constantly increased, as it must be to give even the same excitement, it will grow at last to such a pitch that the natural body is worn out and torn to pieces. These alternatives are but differing forms of death.

Perfecting his creature throughout ages, God at last gave him reason and called him man. This was the fruit of that gift of freedom: for every power committed to his will, the new-enfranchised creature devised an abuse, to the end of sensuality. The power to choose and reason upon his food lies wholly within his will; with the result that he grows blurred and bloated from excess, or lean-eyed and cavernous with hungry longing. The faculty to reproduce his kind, also entrusted to him, he has transformed from a pure instinct to an absorbing passion; after a brief pairing season, animals are sexless throughout the year, but man is ever insatiate with hungry longings. Of the bodily powers, God kept to himself the heart and the life-breath, holding them back from his creature's interference. Were it otherwise, man in his perverseness seeking sensuality even in these, would have broken the vital casket in fragments, abolishing himself long ago from the earth.

It is well that the animals are dumb. They might mock their lord. Sensuality is as foreign to them as the fear of death. These

are the sign-manuals of our humanity. Yet the instinct which leads so far astray is a pure one, destined to an infinitely better reward, a far higher fulfilment than any dreamed by man. For the lust of life is at heart the desire of immortality, the longing for infinite being. But we err in meeting nature through our appetites, not through our wills; in coming into the world with a demand, when we should come with an offer of creative work, work carried out through the insight and inspiration of our immortal part. Even bodily health comes always through exertion, and never through sensation; so direct is the admonition of our natural life. Strength comes only through energy well applied, and in the work of the will is our peace.

The true intention of our life is, that the senses should serve the will, not that will should serve the senses. In right living, each sense leading the will to work is strengthened by that work, and by this better way is ready for a stronger sensation; thus the interposition of the will annuls the law of deadening and destruction which hangs over sensation, and leads each sense on a steadily upward path. We can watch this law in two fields. First, in the primal world of instinct, we see that every sense was thus led to perfection, by work and will; by the inherent energy of the will toward life bursting outwards through the living world. Again, under inspiration every sense grows finer. The musician and the painter, while they are faithful to the inner light, may develop their sense of hearing and color to a degree that is magical, through the divine alchemy of the will; following sensation never for sensation's sake, but always as the guide and material of the will.

Yet in face of this simple truth, the ideal of whole nations esteemed the foremost in the modern world is not will but sensation. For the desire of wealth is the lust of sensation, of command over sensual things. Therefore at the very outset we violate the law, reading life's riddle upside down. This universal and corrupt lust, not for one sensation but for all, this craving for a ceaseless ministry of excitement, brings out the greed and graspingness in man, causing endless misery of struggle, and putting vultures and jackals to shame, for the weakness of their claws.

(To be continued.)

A PARABLE.

Moses was commanded by the Spirit of the Eternal to build a Temple, and erect an Altar therein. And all the measurements thereof were given unto Moses, even unto the smallest detail.

Then Moses called unto him from every branch of trade those who could do the best and grandest work. To each he gave instruction; unto the carpenter as to the kind of wood he needs must find, and how to cut and how to build it, the length, the breadth and thickness of each piece; unto the blacksmith as to the size, the quality of metal, the temper and the hardness, and in what manner it should be wrought, the heat of fire and kind of fuel; unto the goldsmith and the silversmith as to the weight and fineness of the precious metal, cut and chased and finished, how bright the polish and how fine the lines; unto the lapidary the kind and size of jewels to be cut, the colors, and the facets to be ground, the proper blending of the rays of light to make a perfect harmony; unto the cabinet-maker, and to each and every other man whose labors were to build the Altar all that which he must know to do his finest work, to bring his most precious offering. Upon this Altar is to burn the Sacred Fire.

Then each one chosen for this work gave from his heart, his head, his hand, the best he had. Behold! The work is done; each part complete. Each laborer has measured out his final part; and it is good, for each has offered but the best.

The master architect is called to place the parts together. But vain are all his labors; the parts will not unite; each laps upon the other; no two join close. He tries again, and yet again. His efforts all are failures.

The builders of the parts assemble. The master architect asks each in turn the instructions given him; his work is viewed, it marks to measurement correct. Each piece is perfect. No one can find an error.

Then Moses was informed of all these things and said:

"The workmen must have failed to do as they were bidden."

To which the answer:

"The parts are perfect and according to the Law."

And Moses came unto the place and saw the work and looked upon each part, and measured all, and found it good and just, and like

unto the Law. Then Moses tried to bring the parts together. Nor could he do it. The Altar to the Eternal could not be raised, each part fell by itself.

Then Moses went away and cried aloud, lamenting that the Altar could not be raised, and yet its parts were all according to the Law. And the Spirit of the Eternal said unto him:

"Even now the parts are perfect and according to the Law, and the Master Architect and Moses cannot raise the Altar, for the parts will not unite. Bring those who made the parts; bring all together; let each his offering bring; the best from each; let each his offering place upon the spot whereon his part should rest. All acting as a whole the parts shall come together; the Altar shall be builded."

And Moses did as he was bidden; and he who wrought in wood brought wood, and he in iron his iron; the same in stone, in copper, in silver and in gold, and in the precious stones and jewels rare; each brought the finest of his labor, the product of his heart, his head, his hand, and knowing where his work should rest he placed it in position. And all at once placed each his work upon the ground or in the air, and lo! the parts all came together, without a mar or flaw, a perfect whole.

The Sacred Altar was complete.

THEOSOPHY AND THE WORLD.

What is the real mission of the Theosophical Society? That is a question often asked. Its answer is to be found in the Society's avowed objects. These show that the only binding object of the Theosophical organization is "to form a nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity without any distinctions whatever."

Many earnest members, however, have come to believe that they can promote this first and only binding object by pursuing the two subsidiary objects. The present writer entertains that view and has on many occasions endeavored to express it.

These two subsidiary objects—too well known to need recapitulation—contain within themselves Master K. H.'s statement of the Society's "chief aim" as being "to extirpate current superstitions and scepticism, and from long-sealed ancient fountains to draw the proof that man may shape his own future destiny, and know for a certainty that he can live hereafter, if he only wills, and that all 'phenomena' are but manifestations of natural law, to try to comprehend which is the duty of every intelligent being." (*Occult World*, pp. 94, 95.)

Members of the Society, it was said, "may help to furnish the materials for a needed universal religious philosophy; one impregnable to scientific assault, because itself the finality of absolute science, and a religion that is indeed worthy of the name since it includes the relations of man physical to man psychical, and of the two to all that is above and below them."

But this statement of what could and should be accomplished, was made, not to the Society as such, but to some of its members as individuals; for the Society as such has no distinct teachings to promulgate, except those expressed in its published objects.

This immediately draws an important distinction between the activities and duties of the Society and the activities and duties of its members, a distinction which should never be lost sight of if the Society is to be preserved from dogmatism.

The Society, for instance, has no political views of any sort. Its members, however, are free to entertain and promulgate any and all political views, so long as they do this without compromising the Society.

A great many members believe that to spread a knowledge of such laws as these of Karma, Reincarnation and the Perfectibility of Man, will, in the long run, do more for the world than any other kind of propaganda. Others, not satisfied with this activity alone, affecting individuals and their surroundings from within without, so to speak, have endeavored to supplement this work by various undertakings of a philanthropic and occasionally of a political character; in which case they have endeavored to affect individuals by working from without within, as well as from within without.

So long as the motive is right and the conviction is sincere, it probably matters little just what sort of work is done by different members. There is such a thing as "specialization of function," and therefore of duty. Some people are better fitted to work in certain ways than in others; some have a special gift, for example, for working among children; others, without this very valuable gift, do better in other fields of activity. The ultimate object is the same—to help forward the evolution of the race.

For these reasons a wide tolerance and liberality should be felt and practised. Those who think that all members should assist in some particular undertaking merely because it is endorsed by "one having (or claiming) authority," fail to understand the real nature of man. Every man has to find and follow his own path, both for purposes of interior development and for purposes of outer work.

Also there is the factor of personal Karma, which is sometimes very powerful. Every one has had a past, and that past may have to be completed and finished off, in certain respects. This process may take but a brief period, but only the individual with the help of time can judge of that, and while it is going on it may lead him into special fields of work, and into the fulfillment of special and unexpected duties.

Again we see the need for tolerance, for abstinence from criticism, and for consideration of one's own duty rather than of the duties of other people, which are in fact never known to us and can not be judged. And again we see the need for keeping the Society free and undogmatic, devoid of political or of specific charitable coloring.

Theosophy is not what has been claimed for it unless it throws new light from the past upon all human problems. That it does this its students know. If they are doctors, it helps them to under-

stand the science of healing. If they are mothers, it helps them to rear and train their children wisely. If they are business men, it helps them in their business. *For theosophical principles are capable of universal application.*

Theosophical principles should be applied by Theosophists in the performance of all their duties, beginning with those nearest to hand. As citizens, for example, they will probably hold that they owe a duty to the community of which they are units, and Theosophy should be a guide to them in such a common-place matter as the casting of a vote; and though there never should be, and I trust never will be, a "theosophical political party," the time will surely come when theosophical conceptions of brotherhood, of interdependence—yes, and of Karma—will affect the tone and character of political proceedings.

Each member must be left to decide for himself whether or not this or that particular political formula best expresses *his own interpretation* of theosophical principles; but all Theosophists would unite in upholding *right conduct* in political procedure, and the honest government of a country, on the basis of principle, for the good of the people as a whole.

The welfare of their country and the welfare of the world as a whole, must always be matters of vital moment to them, and though, as said already, each member must discover for himself his "special function" and his most suitable sphere of activity, and though the real and basic work of the Theosophist must ever remain interior, concerning itself chiefly with the inner life of this "great orphan humanity"—yet some will perhaps remember and find inspiration in the following statement by a Master in the letters previously quoted, feeling that if Masters should be working today in affairs affecting nations (as I for one devoutly believe they are), *their* work may always be helped by a bold and timely declaration of theosophical ideals and principles, even by the least and humblest of their followers:—

"There never was a time within or before the so-called historical period when our predecessors were not moulding events and 'making history,' the facts of which were subsequently and invariably distorted by historians to suit contemporary predjudices. *Are you quite sure that the visible heroic figures in the successive dramas were not often but their puppets?*"

OUR THEOSOPHICAL CONVENTION.

The Fourteenth Annual Convention of the T. S. A. met in Columbus, Ohio, Sunday, April 29, 1900. Dr. A. P. Buchman was elected Temporary Chairman, and Dr. Thomas M. Stewart, Temporary Secretary.

The Committee on Credentials (Messrs. Bachman, Stewart and Ebann) reported the following branches as represented by delegates: Ananta Branch of New York City, Arthur S. Pinkham; Fort Wayne, Ind., Dr. Buchman; Columbus, Ohio, J. L. Bachman; Middletown, O., Mrs. Gordon; Indianapolis, Ind., William Atkinson and G. W. Scofield; Dayton, O., Mr. Hamlin Garst; Cincinnati, O., Mrs. Buck, Mrs. Manning; Messrs. Manning, Ebann, Leonard, Tenney and Stewart. Branches were represented by proxies as follows: Salt Lake City; Kansas City; San Francisco; Washington, D. C.; Syracuse, N. Y.; Baltimore; Yonkers, N. Y.; Seattle; H. P. B. Branch, N. Y.; Oakland, Calif.; Jamestown, N. Y.; Colorado Springs and Brooklyn, N. Y.

The permanent organization was effected by continuing Drs. Buchman and Stewart in their respective positions.

At this point, somewhat out of the regular order of business, Dr. J. D. Buck was nominated for President for the ensuing year. Dr. Buck protested, but learning that the Convention wanted the matter to come up at once, he was called upon to present any matters he might have in mind before consenting to accept the nomination.

Dr. Buck stated, that, in the future, he would probably work in other organizations as well as in the T. S. Hence, he wanted all to know his position, and that should his name continue identified with "The Temple", this would be because he felt that its work was in the right direction.

On call for the question, Dr. Buck was unanimously elected President of the T. S. A. for the ensuing year.

Mr. A. H. Spencer was elected Vice-President and Treasurer. The Executive Committee was elected as follows: G. E. Harter, Chicago; William Main, New York City; General William Ludlow, Havana, Cuba; A. P. Buchman, Fort Wayne, Ind.; M. H. Phelps, New York City, and J. D. Bond, Fort Wayne, Ind.

The delegates received with favor the idea of placing the THEOSOPHICAL FORUM upon a subscription basis and of infusing life into it as a worthy successor of the old *Path*. The announcement that Mrs. Vera Johnston would assume editorial management of the THEOSOPHICAL FORUM was heartily applauded, and the action of the Executive Committee meets with the decided approval of the Convention.

Mr. A. H. Spencer's report as Treasurer was received and the balance of $567.89 was labeled as "comfortable". Thanks were given to Mr. Spencer for his work as Treasurer.

Telegrams were read from San Francisco, Salt Lake City and from Mrs. Lang, who is sojourning in the Yosemite Valley. Greetings were received from Toronto, Canada, and from Dr. Franz Hartmann on behalf of the T. S. in Germany. Mr. G. E. Harter sent a royally warm letter; Mr. A. H. Spencer, Major Clark, of Washington, D. C., and Mr. Charles Johnston, also sent letters of suggestion or of congratulation

For the benefit of strangers present Drs. Buck and Buchman each gave a short address on "Theosophy".

A vote of thanks was then passed to the hotel, the local papers and the local T. S. for courtesies extended.

To Mr. Charles Johnston a vote of thanks and of appreciation, for his able work on the THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, was unanimously passed.

At eight o'clock a large audience assembled in the Convention Hall of the Great Southern Hotel, which was well filled, where public addresses were made by Mr. Arthur S. Pinkham, Dr. A. P. Buchman, Dr. J. D. Buck.

THOMAS M. STEWART.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

FOUNDED BY H. P. BLAVATSKY AT NEW YORK IN 1875.

Its objects are:

1st. The formation of a nucleus of universal brotherhood without distinctions of race, creed, sex, caste or color.

2d. The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences.

3d. The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychic powers latent in man.

The Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma or personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they demand for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling towards all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm *a scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *Path* they tread in this."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the President, Dr. J. D. Buck, 116 W. 7th Street, Cincinnati, Ohio. Admission fee, $1.00. Annual dues, including subscription to THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, $2.00. Theosophical literature can be obtained from the W. Q. Judge Publishing Co., P. O. Box 1584, New York, N. Y.

THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM.

The Society is not responsible for any statements therein unless contained in an official document. Questions, answers to questions, opinions and notes on Theosophical subjects are invited.

Subscriptions $1.00 per annum. Single copies 10 cents.

All communications should be addressed, THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, P. O. Box 1584. New York.